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Control: 12377

REVIEWED BY J.M. Razim May 8, 1982 — Rec'd: November 21, 1957 6:06 p.m.

FROM: Tripoli

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 338, November 21, 1 p.m.

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Re EMBTEL 329

In hour and half discussion with Prime Minister in Tripoli morning November 20, Ambassador reviewed in detail United States position on military assistance to Libya. He indicated that after being informed by British earlier this year of plan for withdrawal troops from Libya and of United Kingdom's inability continue commitments previously entered into concerning equipping and training Libyan army, the USG, subject to desires GOL, was prepared assure full wing responsibilities: 1. Carry to rapid completion delivery equipment for thousand man increment Libyan army: 2. United States prepared undertake training these men: 3. United States also prepared consider assumption training responsibilities for Libyan army: 4. United States prepared discuss with GOL its military equipment requirements.

Ambassador pointed out that United States position based on desire be helpful in assisting in solution to problem faced both by Libya and by United Kingdom, the close friend and ally of the United States. USG felt Libyan need for effective army to protect sovereignty GOL and maintain internal security was real and once basic Anglo-Libyan decision reached as to future role British in military assistance, we were prepared discuss how we could assist within context and spirit MAP agreement recently signed between us. Ambassador stressed that mission Libyan army must first be clearly defined, then such questions as force goal, rate of expansion, and types and quantities of equipment needed determined in light of mission. He also pointed out that army is not productive

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and that too-large establishment for Libyas small need would prove serious handicap to country's development.

Prime Minister thanked Ambassador for his meticulous presentation and said GOL welcomed assurance that USG perceived its need and was willing assist. He stated that an Anglo-Libyan understanding on future role of British in training army clearly must be arrived at as first order of business. He said he was favorably impressed with MAAG Chief Sachs and was pleased that he was working closely with Libyan Army Staff.

Prime Minister inquired whether United States equipment would be available in time for display in Independence Day parade, December 24, to which Ambassador replied that USG making every effort get bulk equipment Tripoli by first week December Prime Minister requests that MAAG make every effort prepare equipment and give sufficent intensive instruction to Libyan soldiers permit favorable display on December 24.

Prime Minster said that question internal security in Libya had become serious with British decision reduce troop level because GOL had always regarded British presence as backstop to local police forces in maintaining order. Elimination British as factor of strength made indispensible rapid creation force capable coping with any situation which might develop internally. At same time, however, expansion army would impose additional strain on Libyan budget in form of increase demand funds for salaries, allowance, food, installations, POL, etcetera, quite apart from military equipment which might be provided by friendly powers. This was major problem now facing GOL which hoped that the United Kingdom and United States would be able assist in this regard.

The Ambassador said that it apparent that realistic approach must be made to solution problem of creating an effective internal security force without imposing undue financial strain on Libyan resources

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resources and reiterated that the USG prepared enter into discussion on nature such force whenever requested by GOL.

An aide memoire embodying the four points noted above was left with the Prime Minister. Ambassador then departed for Benghazi. General comments made by Prime Minister on other subjects during conversation covered in next following cable.

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